

### THE MUPPET SHOW c. 1975-1981

The Muppet Show was a TV variety show created by Jim Henson with the hopes of expanding the Muppets' reach to include a diverse range of age groups. The Muppet Show aimed to engage older viewers with famous quest stars and tasteful amounts of blue humor. The show introduced a large cast of furry characters that would go on to be the stars of theatrically released Muppet movies. Each episode featured a combination of skits presented onstage and a window into the commotion happening backstage, rife with interpersonal conflict.

### **SESAME STREET**

c. 1969-

Sesame Street is an educational television program that makes learning fun for preschoolers all over the world. It was the first widespread showcase for Jim Henson's Muppets, a puppet act that he had been workshopping since the 1950s. A cast of zany puppet characters teach children letter recognition, basic arithmetic, and interpersonal skills, with an interspersal of plot and humor that appeal to parents and older children as well.

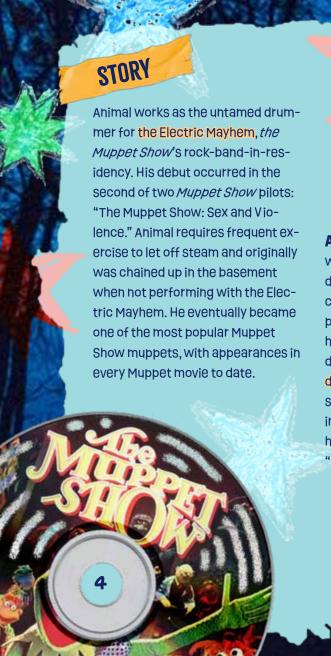
SESAME STREE

#### FRAGGLE ROCK

c. 1983-1987

Fraggle Rock is a children's television program created by Jim Henson with the aim of exploring metaphysical aspects of life and humanity. The creatures in Fraggle Rock, known as "Fraggles," struggle with issues of prejudice. spirituality, identity, social conflict, and the inevitability of death. The colorful cast of Fraggles learn and grow from the challenges they face, and they find joy in each others' company and peace in being themselves as they live their tumultuous lives in the caves of their underground society.





# ANIMAL

c. 1975

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

Ahimal is a bright red muppet with an angry eyebrow, a row of disorganized bottom teeth, and a chain around his neck. His original performer Frank Oz once said that he had Animal's personality boiled down to five words: Sex, sleep, food, drums, and pain. Animal tends to speak simple phrases repetitively in a guttural shout, often related to his interests (e. g. "BEAT DRUMS" or "WO-MAN!!!").

# DESIGNER:

Jim Henson (*designer*)
Dave Goelz (*builder*)

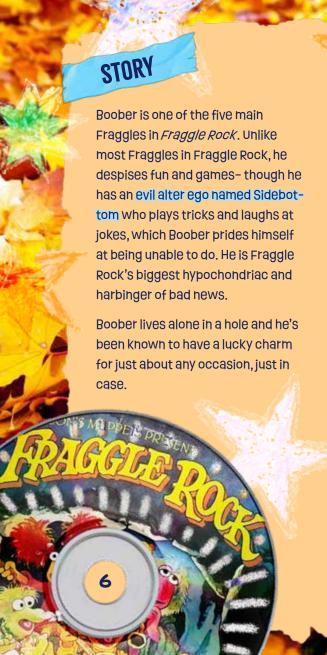
### **PERFORMER:**

Frank Oz (1975-2000) Eric Jacobson (2002-)

**FUN FACT:** 

Animal has been known to try and eat his drum kit, and also glass.





# **BOOBER FRAGGLE**

c. 1983

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

Boober Fraggle has bluish green skin and a mop of red hair at the end of his tail and on top of his head, pressed down by a brown cap obscuring his eyes. He spends most of his time worrying about doom and disease. Boober is superstitious and suffers from many phobias, but he enjoys the simpler things in life such as doing laundry, cooking, and spending time with his friends.



Michael K. Frith (*designer*)
Leslee Asch (*builder*)

### **PERFORMER:**

Dave Goelz

**FUN FACT:** 

"According to Boober Fraggle, there are only two things certain in this world: death and laundry." -henson.com



Originally one of many chickens, Camilla distinguished herself from the flock as she became Gonzo the Great's number one main squeeze. She only speaks chicken, leaving

She only speaks chicken, leaving Gonzo to interpret her squawks for the audience. Camilla has appeared in multiple Muppet big-screen productions, from *The Muppet Movie* to *The Muppets Most Wanted*, and her relationship with Gonzo is still going strong after 40 long years together–though she's still impatiently waiting for him to put a **ring** on her **wing**!

# **CAMILLA THE CHICKEN**

c. 1978

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

**Camilla the Chicken** is a chicken. She has white feathers and an orange beak and a red wattle. She also has luscious eyelashes, so it is obvious that she is a girl chicken.

Camilla is a very talented and dedicated singer, dancer, and performer.

Though she is a diva in her own right, she exists in the Muppets canon mainly as a foil to Gonzo.



Jim Henson (designer)

### PERFORMER:

Jerry Nelson (1978-2003) Matt Vogel (2008-)

**FUN FACT:** 

Camilla is Gonzo's long term girlfriend, assuming he can tell her apart from the other chickens, which he canonically cannot.



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Dr. Bunsen Honeydew is *The Muppet Show*'s resident madcap scientist, working in his lab alongside his assistant Beaker. He has appeared in every Muppets movie, with a role that often bears large influence on the movie's plot. Muppet Labs, founded and run by Honeydew, is responsible for a multitude of scientific discoveries and inventions from Insta-Grow Pills to the Automatic Wastebasket. Honeydew reportedly earned his doctorate at Carnegie Mellonhead University.

# DR. BUNSEN HONEYDEW

c. 1976

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

Dr. Bunsen Honeydew is a honeydew-colored lab coat wearing muppet with a round, bald head and glasses in lieu of eyes. At his core he is a man of science and he is easily excitable when it comes to his various experiments, inventions, and theories. He has fully articulated hands that he uses to their full scientific potenial in his lab.

# DESIGNER:

Jim Henson (*designer*)

Dave Goelz (*builder*)

### PERFORMER:

Dave Goelz (1976-)

## **FUN FACT:**

Dr. Honeydew and his assistant Beaker have a long and storied "bromance" that has led to speculation on the part of some eagle-eyed viewers.







# STORY Fozzie Bear is The Muppet Show's resident stand-up comedian, oft punctuating his bad jokes with his trademark laugh: "Wocka wocka!" Fozzie's greatest goal is to find success in show biz, yearning to make it big with his slapstick act. He is best friends with Kermit the Frog and Rowlf the Dog. He has had main roles in all the major Muppet Movies, and he is often heckled onstage by the perpetually negative duo Statler and Waldorf.

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# **FOZZIE BEAR**

c. 1976

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

Fozzie Bear is a honey-brown bear muppet with a dapper brown fedora and a white and pink pol-ka-dot scarf tied in a bow around his neck. His eyebrows are perpetually raised, giving him an open and genuine expression.

Fozzie is a comedian and he loves to tell jokes, though he isn't the funniest bear out there.

# DESIGNER:

Michael K. Frith (designer)
Bonnie Erickson (Builder)

### **PERFORMER:**

Frank Oz (1976-2000) Eric Jacobson (*2002-*)

**FUN FACT:** 

On one occasion, Kermit entrusted Fozzie to host the Muppet Show while he was home sick. This decision ended in disaster.



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Gonzo was originally introduced as a bizarre avante-garde stuntman, performing violence-based acts of daring that typically ended with the audience booing him off the stage. Despite this, he still has a zany, bombastic appreciation for life. In his first television appearance, he ate a tire to the tune of "Flight of the Bumblebee." Gonzo is best friends and roommates with Rizzo the Rat. When it comes to dating he's somewhat of a chicken-chaser, but his heart belongs to Camilla.

## GONZO c, 1976

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

Gonzo (also known as Gonzo the Great and the Great Gonzo) is a whatever. He is an unclassifiable muppet creature with a long, tubular beak, blue fur, heavy yellow eyelids, and a look of despair deep in his eyes. He takes pride in his uniqueness and his job as the Muppet Show's resident daredevil performance artiste.

# DESIGNER:

Jim Henson (*designer*)
Dave Goelz (*builder*)

### PERFORMER:

Dave Goelz (1976-)

## **FUN FACT:**

Gonzo plays the central role in the 1999 movie Muppets from Space, which details his mental breakdown while stressing the importance of found family.



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Henchy Fraggle is the World's Oldest Fraggle's henchman in Fraggle Rock. He typically repeats everything the World's Oldest Fraggle says, even before he says it, which results in a reprimand in the form of a **bohk** on the head. His largest role appears in an episode in the last season called "Inspector Red," where he steals the Fraggle horn so there won't be any more Fraggle council meetings (and thus no more opportunities for the World's Oldest Fraggle to bonk him).

# HENCHY FRAGGLE

c. 1983

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

**Henchy Fraggle** is a green Fraggle with blue hair and wide eyes. He typically dresses in eclectic rags in true Fraggle fashion.

Henchy does not like being bonked on the head, though he often is when the World's Oldest Fraggle reprimands him. The World's Oldest Fraggle reprimands him often.



Unknown

### PERFORMER:

John Pattison

## **FUN FACT:**

Henchy Fraggle, originally a male Fraggle, was reimagined as a female Fraggle in the 2022 Fraggle Rock reboot, "Back to the Rock." Congratulations, Henchy.











## STORY Perhaps the most famous muppet of all time, Kermit the Frog is the star host of The Muppet Show and the main character in most muppet movie productions. He has a romantic history with Miss Piggy, though he insists it's a professional relationship (one where he thinks they're professionals and she wants to be in a relationship). From humble swamp beginnings, Kermit rose to fame through The Muppet show and brought all of his muppet friends along with him. 24

# **KERMIT THE FROG**

c. 1955

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

**Kermit the Frog** is a green frog with an eleven-pointed collar and a distinct, Kermity voice. He plays the straight man in many muppet productions, though he is easily frustrated by the whirlwind antics of the muppets in his employ. Though he is their boss, it becomes clear throughout the series that the other muppets are his friends as well and all of the muppets come together to form one big muppet family.



Jim Henson

### PERFORMER:

Jim Henson (1955-1990) Steve Whitmire (1990-2016) Matt Vogel (2017-)

**FUN FACT:** 

The original Kermit the Frog prototype was made out of one of Henson's mother's old coats and had ping pong balls for eyes.



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Most of Lew Zealand's humor is fish-based, as his signature act consists of him throwing his boomerang fish away, after which they come right back to him. In his debut episode, he saves Kermit from being duped into marrying Miss Piggy with a throw of his boomerang fish.

According to Lew's original voice actor, Jerry Nelson, the idea behind Lew was just "the idea of this guy who had a boomerang fish act." So, that's basically Lew Zealand's whole entire deal.

# **LEW ZEALAND**

c. 1978

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

Lew Zealand is a humanoid muppet with an impressive mustache, spiky brown hair, and a red clown nose. He can typically be seen sporting a white ruff around his neck and a fish in his hand. He has a dopey voice and often refers to Kermit as "Mr. The Frog." His fish, which are sentient, really ought to get just as much credit as he does for his act.

# DESIGNER:

Dave Goelz (*designer*) Amy Van Gilder (*builder*)

### **PERFORMER:**

Jerry Nelson (1978-2003) Matt Vogel (2008-)

## **FUN FACT:**

On becoming a great boomerang fish thrower, Lew Zealand offers the following advice: "Well, you gotta have sole. And if you can't get sole, use halibut."



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Miss Piggy rose to fame after winning the Miss Bogen County beauty pageant, during which she also met the self-proclaimed love of her life, Kermit the Frog. She is a pig who is not afraid to take what she wants, whether it be stardom or Kermit's unwitting hand in marriage.

Miss Piggy has starred in every major muppet movie and her book, "Miss Piggy's Guide to Life," quickly became a national bestseller after its release in 1981.

# **MISS PIGGY**

c. 1976

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

Don't be fooled by her glamorous exterior- **Miss Piggy** can kick some serious roast rump. The quint-essential diva with looks and karate chops that could kill, Miss Piggy is a pig muppet with a full head of luscious blonde hair. She has piercing blue eyes, legs for days, and eyelashes that serve full glam 24/7. She is a dramatic actress and a great singer (source: herself).

## DESIGNER:

Bonnie Erickson (*designer/ builder*)

### **PERFORMER:**

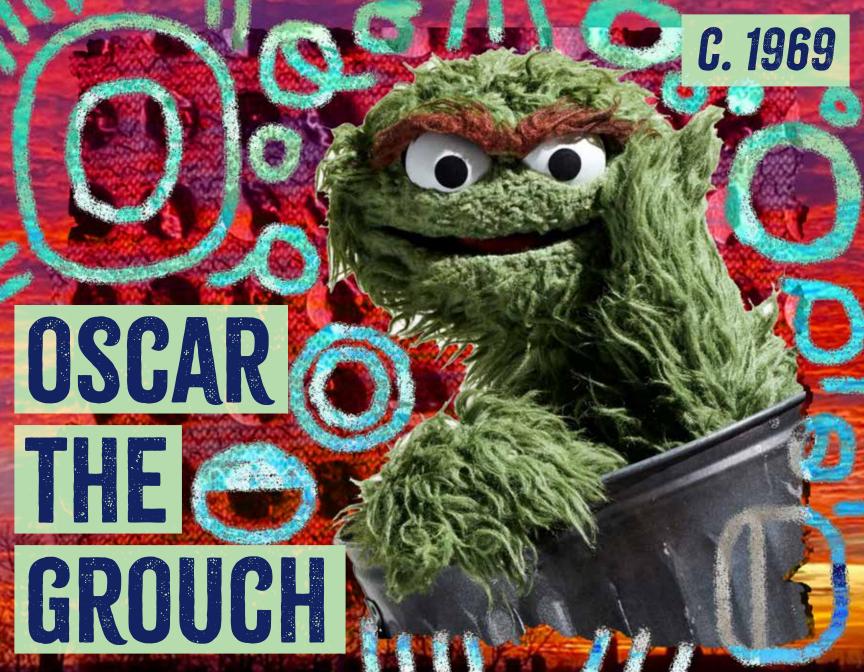
Frank Oz (1976-2002) Eric Jacobson (2001-)

## **FUN FACT:**

Miss Piggy can do just about everything with a smile and a swish of her golden blonde locks, whether it be modelling, acting, singing, karate-chopping, tap dancing, or motorcycle-driving. #Girlboss.







32

Oscar's life goal is to be as miserable as possible and drag everyone down with him in the process, because being miserable makes him happy and being happy makes him miserable. His trademark song is "I Love Trash," with lyrics that wax poetic about his love for waste, refuse, and garbage. He was briefly engaged to his long-term girlfriend, Grungetta, but they decided to call off the wedding for fear their union would make them too happy.

# OSCAR THE GROUCH

c. 1969

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

Oscar the Grouch is a furry green grouch with an angry eyebrow who lives in a trash can on Sesame Street. He loves trash, being grouchy, and his pet worm, Slimey. He's somewhat of a hermit, never leaving his trash can, but doesn't like being completely alone because there's no one to listen to his complaining. He is perpetually 43 years young.

# DESIGNER:

Jim Henson (*designer*)
Don Sahlin (*builder*)

### PERFORMER:

Caroll Spinney (1969-2018) Eric Jacobson (2015-)

**FUN FACT:** 

Underneath his green exterior, Oscar the Grouch is actually orange! It's just impossible to tell underneath all the slime and the mold. That's how he likes it.



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Pepe worked as a chef in Madrid before moving to Hollywood to follow his dreams in show biz after one too many "close calls" in the kitchen. He first appeared on *Muppets Tonight* in 1996 as a companion to Seymour the Elephant before establishing himself as a solo act in *Muppets from Space* (1999).

On occasion he enjoys wearing a tutu and dancing ballet, showing that under the macho exterior he is in touch with his softer, more feminine side.

# PEPE THE KING PRAWN

c. 1996

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

Pepe the King Prawn (full name Pepito Rodrigo Serrano Gonzales) is NOT a shrimp. He is a king prawn and a handsome ladies' man with a sultry Spanish accent. Though short in stature, he is commanding in personality. He is orange and spindly with four arms and a shock of red hair that jets out of his petite head at all angles.

## DESIGNER:

Michael K. Frith (*designer*) Eric Engelhardt (*builder*)

### **PERFORMER:**

Bill Barretta (1996-present)

## **FUN FACT:**

Pepe the King Prawn is a former spokesprawn for Long John Silver's, a seafood fast food chain with locations across the transcontinental US.



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The Queen appeared on *The Muppet Show* on two separate occasions, once in a sketch with Twiggy and again in a sketch with Zero Mostel. With Twiggy, she performed a dramatization of the poem "The King's Breakfast," and with Mostel she performed the song "What Do the Simple Folk Do?" She has not been seen or heard from since. Perhaps she has been usurped? Deposed? Can Miss Piggy comment on this?

# THE QUEEN

c. 1976

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

Void of eyes and any real dimension to her majesty's head, **the Queen** is 30% beak, 10% mouth, and 60% frills, curls, and sweeping fabrics. She is a pink muppet with a long, pointed nose and fully articulated hands. She has been voiced by several different voice actors in her various appearances on *The Muppet Show*.



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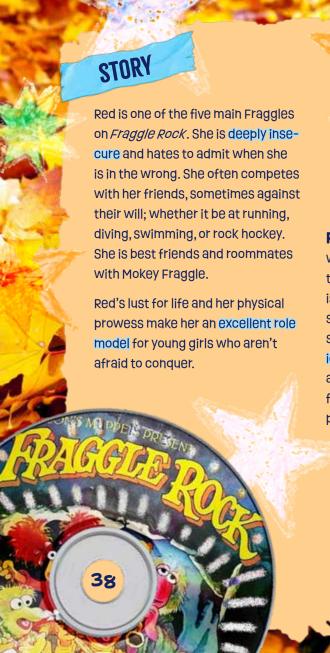
### **PERFORMER:**

Various

**FUN FACT:** 

The Queen's design is based on that of the Featherstone puppet. Could the two be related? Perhaps...





## **RED FRAGGLE**

c. 1983

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

Red Fraggle is a yellow Fraggle with two red-orange pigtails in tufts atop her head. Her baloobius is orange-red as well. She is always seen wearing a red turtleneck sweater. She is an energetic, athletic, and headstrong young lady with a competitive drive. She loves her friends and she is passionate about playing, as all Fraggles are.

## DESIGNER:

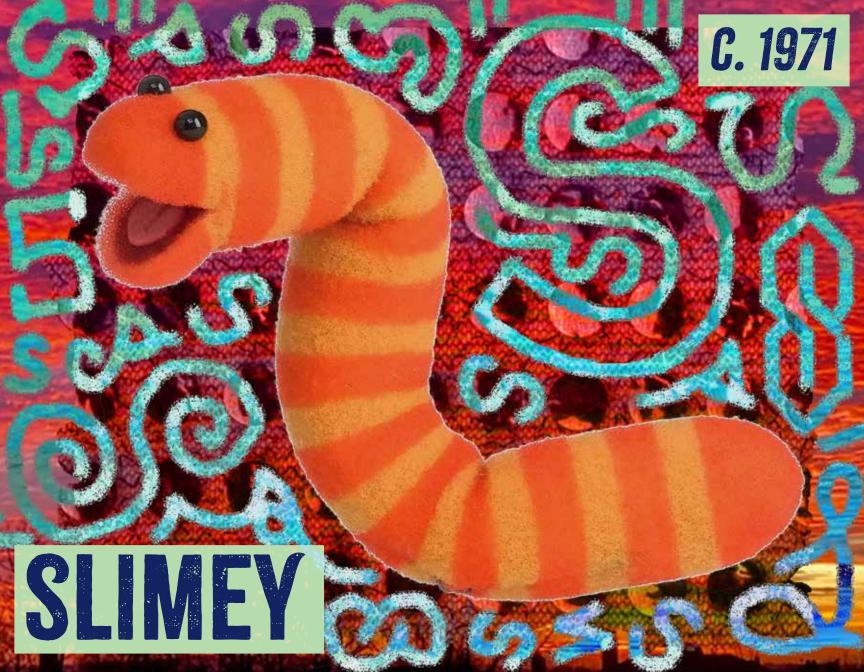
Michael K. Frith (designer)
Rollie Krewson (builder)

### **PERFORMER:**

Karen Prell

## **FUN FACT:**

Red and Mokey share many meaningful moments over the course of the show "Fraggle Rock."







## STORY Marjory the Trash Heap is an omnipotent hub of wisdom that doles out advice to wayward Fraggles. Her acolytes, Philo and Grunge, are two rats that serve as her hype men. She is an oracle, and she lives in the far corner of the Gorgs' garden, making the journey to seek her wisdom a treacherous one. Though her advice is often misinterpreted, she tries her best to send those seeking her assistance in the right direction. 42

## TRASH HEAP

c. 1983

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

The Trash Heap is a sentient and sassy pile of compost who lives outside of Fraggle rock. She consists of multitudes: banana peels, leaves, orange peels, and a saucy pair of pink cat-eye spectacles. She speaks in a non-specific Eastern European accent. She is awe-inspiring in her grandiosity and she knows many magic spells, which she uses for benevolent purposes.

## DESIGNER:

Michael K. Frith (*designer*)
Gootnick, McNamara (*builders*)

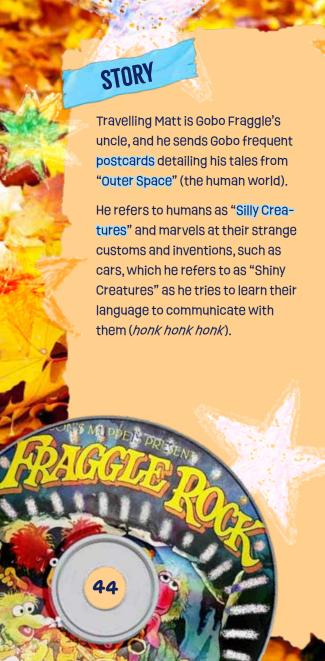
### **PERFORMER:**

Jerry Nelson

### **FUN FACT:**

You may address Marjory the Trash Heap as "Madame Trash Heap," "Your Trashiness," "Madame Heap," or, in informal contexts, simply "Trash Heap."





## **UNCLE TRAVELLING MATT**

c. 1983

### **CHARACTERISTICS**

Uncle Travelling Matt is a humanoid Fraggle with wild white hair, a mustache and mutton chops. He is dressed as an old timey explorer and often carries his knapsack around with him, ensuring he is prepared for anything he may encounter in Outer Space. He is brave, resourceful, and adventurous, though admittedly he is a bit of a clutz.



Michael Frith (*designer*)
Tim Clarke (*builder*)



Dave Goelz

## **FUN FACT:**

Uncle Travelling Matt thinks mannequins are meditating creatures who have found an elevated sense of inner peace through their stillness.









## **WEMBLEY FRAGGLE**

c. 1983

### **CHARACTERISTICS**

wembley is an easily excitable chartreuse Fraggle with yellow hair and a yellow tuft on his tail. He typically wears a very spiffy looking banana tree print shirt. Wembley is allergic to a host of things, including but not limited to laundry lint, cave cotton, rock dust, and bonkleberries. He has trouble making up his mind about anything, but with the help of his friends he usually overcomes his indecision.



Michael K. Frith (designer)
Rollie Krewson (builder)

### PERFORMER:

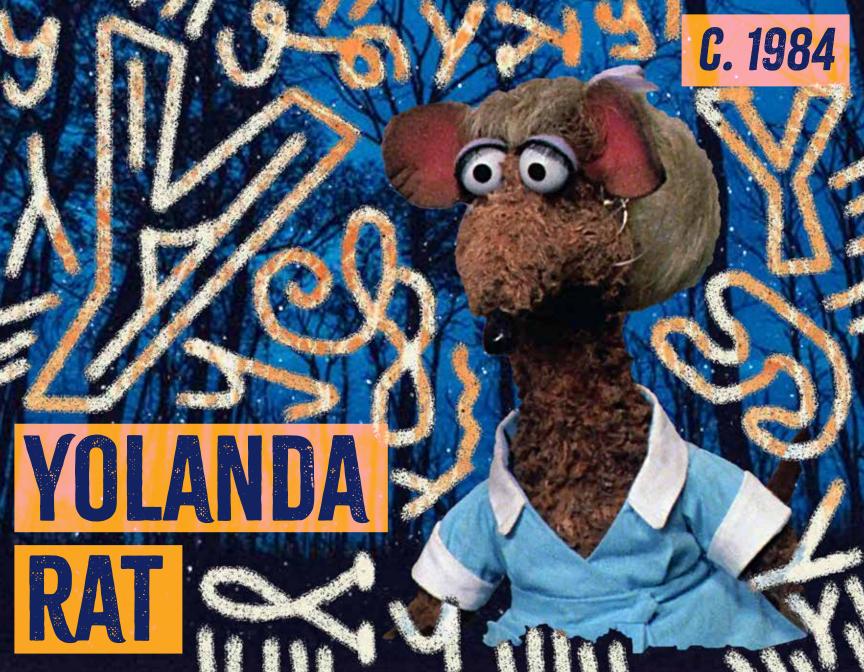
Steve Whitmire

### **FUN FACT:**

In the language of the ancient Fraggles, "Wembley" means "don't scratch your nose in public."







### STORY

**52** 

Between fielding unwanted passes made at her by Rizzo and working odd jobs at Muppet Studios, Yolanda Rat has it rough. Despite the odds, her indomitable spirit and stunning good looks have carried her far. She ended up befriending Rizzo, and they have grown quite close. She's grown more of a personality over the years as the Muppets' writer's room realized they were low on fleshed out female characters.

# **YOLANDA RAT**

c. 1984

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

**Yolanda Rat** is a rat muppet modeled after Rizzo the Rat. Unlike Rizzo, she has eyelashes, a dress, and blonde hair with a bow in it so that everyone can tell she is a girl rat.

She is based off of Rizzo in her design, but that doesn't mean she needs to be constantly compared to him. She is her own woman!



Unknown

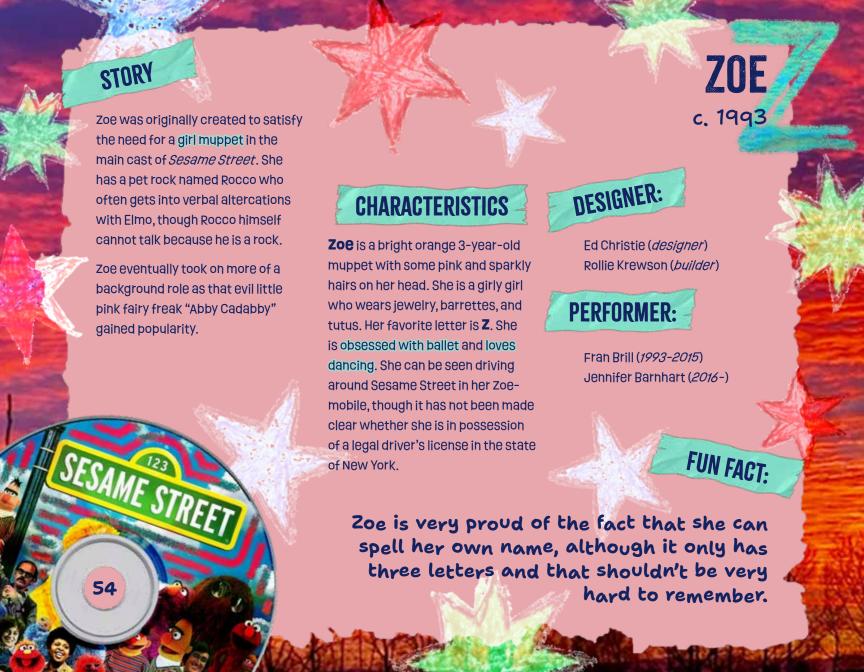
### PERFORMER:

Various Julianne Buescher (1994-)

### **FUN FACT:**

Yolanda is currently studying very hard to get her dream job as an ultrasound technician. She has a B average!





### **ABOUT JIM HENSON**

Jim Henson (1936-1990) was an American puppeteer and filmmaker who first created the Muppets in the mid-1950s. Henson and his team changed the face of children's entertainment and puppetry as a medium with their unique brand of humor, puppet design, and sophisticated themes.

Henson took puppets out of their classic box-stage and put them into environments where they could learn, grow, and inspire audiences both young and old.

By the time of Henson's death in 1990, the Muppets had become a **global phenomenon** that would touch the **hearts** and **minds** of viewers for generations to come.

Each Muppet has their own distinct personality, purpose, and **unique** story to tell.

#### Sonia Pivovarov

Typography II Professor Guenet Abraham Art 337 Spring 2025

